

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH POLICY 05-08-01

CATEGORY: FINANCIAL AFFAIRS
SECTION: Resource Management
SUBJECT: Personal Use of University Resources
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 1, 1995
PAGE(S): 2

I. POLICY BACKGROUND

The importance of personal integrity regarding University resources should not be minimized. Small savings throughout a large institution can add up to a meaningful number. Students, parents, donors, taxpayers, governmental agencies, etc., have expectations that University resources will be consumed in the support of the institution's mission. This policy will be successful if we are able to create an atmosphere of personal integrity and raise consciousness on this issue.

We must be sensitive to the expectations of our constituents and avoid personal use of University resources when possible, and encourage and facilitate reimbursement when personal use is allowed or unavoidable. This policy is not intended to be punitive in nature. Blatant abuse can and should be detected and prevented by good management, even in the absence of a formalized policy. However, the existence of a formalized policy demonstrates the University's commitment to prudent fiscal operations.

No policy can address all possible issues and situations. Hopefully the guidance and examples provided in this policy will help individuals resolve policy exceptions. Regardless of the situation, the basic concept to keep in mind is that personal use of University resources is inappropriate.

II. SCOPE

This policy establishes the administrative responsibilities and general guidelines for the personal use of University resources. This would include use of the University's phone system, facsimile machines, copiers, office supplies, tools, equipment, and vehicles. It also discusses student and staff involvement in administrators' and faculty efforts.

The use of University facilities, the University mail system, and University-owned computing equipment are excluded from this policy. See Policies 04-01-01 [Extracurricular Use of University Facilities](#), 10-01-02 [University Mail](#), and 10-02-05 [Computer Access and Use](#).

III. POLICY

Personal use of University resources is generally not permitted. However, when personal use of University resources is unavoidable, reimbursement should be made to the University.

Administration

The FAIS departmental administrators are responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy. These individuals should develop the applicable reimbursement and monitoring mechanisms relevant to the circumstances of their particular department. Cost/benefit factors should be considered when determining the need for formalized control and documentation requirements. Administrators may determine that nominal personal usage, for example less than one dollar of copying or telephone charges in a month, does not justify collection and deposit efforts. Requests for policy exception or conflict resolutions must move upward through each level of the reporting structure related to the individual desiring exception to this policy. Obvious abuse or non-compliance should be addressed with the employee by the employee's supervisor.

Telephone and Facsimile Use

Non-business-related long distance (toll) telephone and facsimile charges to University accounts should be reimbursed to the institution by the employee initiating or responsible for the call. Excessive non-business local calls and facsimile charges are also not permitted.

FAIS departmental administrators should determine the timing of the required reimbursements, e.g., monthly or quarterly, and the monitoring or control system to be established based on the magnitude of the department's toll calls, e.g., honor system, sign-up sheet, or formalized specific call identification.

Copier Use

Personal use of the University's copiers should be reimbursed to the University. Based on volume and cost considerations, FAIS departmental administrators should determine whether copier usage should be controlled by auditrons, vend-a-cards, sign-up sheets, or an honor system.

Office Supplies, Tools, Equipment, and Vehicles

Office supplies should only be used for University business. Tools, equipment, and University-owned vehicles may not be loaned for personal use.

Student and Staff Involvement in Administrators' or Faculty Efforts

Administrators and faculty are not to request/demand student or staff support for their non-University activities. Inappropriate requests for student or staff support include but are not limited to:

- work related to private businesses or endeavors in which the administrator or faculty member realizes financial benefits;
- community or recreational activities unrelated to the University's public service mission, e.g., little league teams or religious groups; and
- purely social activities hosted by an administrator or faculty member even if attended by other University employees, e.g., weddings, birthdays, etc.

Student and staff support for speeches, papers, book manuscripts, non-paid community service, etc., should only be requested if these activities have some relationship to the administrators' or faculty members' responsibilities at the University. Personal work not related to the University should be done by administrators, faculty, or staff themselves or hired out by them at their own expense. This work is not to be done on University time or utilizing University facilities under any circumstances.